

Towards an Architecture of Mythos: Lucian Blaga and Utopian Pessimism

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Abstract

This article explores the concept of mythos in Lucian Blaga's philosophy and its potential for constructing a metaphysics that embraces mystery and transcends the limitations of pure reason. It begins by establishing the foundation of mythos in the Buddhist concept of "Maya" and the two truths doctrine, highlighting the illusory nature of perceived reality and the limitations of human knowledge. It then delves into Blaga's philosophy, where "mystery" is a central category, and the Great Anonymous represents the ultimate, unknowable source of existence. By integrating Blaga's ideas with notions of cognitive biases and Jacobo Grinberg-Zylberbaum's synergic theory, the article argues for a "metaphysics of mythos." This metaphysics recognizes the limitations of human reason and proposes an approach to understanding a reality that incorporates mythical and poetic thinking, opening new avenues for philosophical inquiry beyond the confines of traditional, logic-centered metaphysics. The article concludes by suggesting that artists, as creators of mythos, play a vital role in shaping this new metaphysics and expanding the boundaries of human understanding.

Keywords: Lucian Blaga, Mythos, Metaphysics, Mystery, Great Anonymous, Maya, Two Truths Doctrine, Cognitive Biases, Synergic Theory, Utopian Pessimism

1. A Journey Towards Mystery

While working on my doctoral dissertation in 2019, I had a clear understanding of some of the fundamental premises that would accompany my proposal of “utopian pessimism,”¹ for example, the notion that every pessimistic system (Arthur Schopenhauer, Philipp Mainländer, Friedrich Nietzsche, Albert Camus, etc.) contained some germ of hope, a proposal for liberation or redemption in relation to the suffering of the world (one of the basic theses of pessimistic philosophy). What I did not expect was to come across the category of mythos. It was thanks to Nāgārjuna – a Buddhist philosopher and monk of the 2nd and 3rd centuries – that I was able to find the missing key to connect a vision that, from the beginning, was contradictory and paradoxical (I prefer to call it “dialectical tearing”). Pessimism and utopia? Suffering and hope? To explain this, I used some metaphors, such as the “starry night” or “laughing while crying” (based on the poem by the Mexican writer Juan de Dios Peza). It is not my interest to present my findings here; however, for further details, please see my doctoral dissertation *El mundo como vacuidad y mythos* [*The World as Emptiness and Mythos*], but only to introduce the way in which I came upon the concept of mythos.

The inquiry concerned the nature of reality, specifically whether the world is, as stated in Buddhism, an illusion (the veil of Maya). In this way, even suffering itself must be an illusion. It is important to clarify that, for Nāgārjuna, this illusion does not imply the negation of truth but the distinction between two types of truth: “The teaching of the Buddhas is based on two truths, the conventional truth (*saṃvṛti-satya*) and the truth according to the ultimate sense (*paramārtha-satya*). Those who do not understand the difference between these two truths do not understand the profound truth that dwells in the Buddha's message” (Nāgārjuna 24.8-9).

Suffering, the pain of the world (*Weltschmerz*) is absolutely true, but its truth is conventional. And this is so because the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth, only conventional

truths (emptiness-*sunyatā*). This was my first intuition regarding mythos. From there, I began to analyze why, in our languages, the word myth is linked to an attitude of lying, of falsehood; suffice it to mention the adjective "mythomaniac" to account for this attitude.

I remembered my classes, many years ago, with Dr. Enrique Dussel, who told us that myths were the expression of truths in symbolic language. The same thing that science does, through arguments and theories, myth does, using its own tools: allegory, metonymy, metaphor, etc.

I could also remember the research of Dr. Verónica Peinado, a Mexican philologist, who traces the distinction between mythos and logos back to Plato and Pindar. Before them, they were synonymous (see the texts of Homer and Hesiod) and can be translated as "word." We owe the breakdown, more than anything, to Plato, who clearly, in the Republic, in Book II, despises poets, "for it is they who have composed the false myths that have been narrated and are still narrated to men" (377b-377e). A few lines earlier he tells us the following: "Λόγων δὲ διττὸν εἶδος, τὸ μὲν ἀληθές, ψεῦδος δ' ἕτερον" [Now then, there are two kinds of discourse, one true and the other false] (376e-377a). The "true" has come down to our days as "logos" and the false as "mythos."

The distinction was made, but it was somewhat artificial, a product more of Plato's philosophical and political inclinations than of a real argument. Unfortunately, this thesis has been filtering down through the centuries. Already in the Middle Ages, Clement of Alexandria equated the Logos with God, while Modernity gave a twist to logos, de-divinizing it to attribute to it the character of factual discourses (which we call sciences). Myths, for their part, were relegated to the realm of literature or weak minds.

Five years have passed since that was "revealed" to me. I have found resonances of this idea in authors such as Sigmund Freud, Fritz Mauthner, Hans Vaihinger or John Gray. However, one of the philosophers I worked with most at the time (he was the subject of my master's thesis), whom I quoted in my doctoral work and whom I continued to reflect on in order to deepen my understanding, was Lucian Blaga.

This article delves into the intersection of Blaga's philosophy with the concept of utopian pessimism, demonstrating how Blaga's ideas, particularly his emphasis on myth and mystery, contribute to the construction of a metaphysics that embraces human limitations and transcends the confines of pure reason. Through an examination of Blaga's key concepts, such as the Great Anonymous and the role of mythical thinking, this work aims to clarify the connection between mythos and mystery, arguing that mythos serves as a means of revealing and amplifying mystery, rather than diminishing it. By exploring this connection, the article seeks to establish a foundation for a "metaphysics of mythos," one that recognizes the limitations of human knowledge while simultaneously embracing the potential for transcendence through imaginative and mythical thinking.

2. Mythos and Illusion

We have pointed out that, in the Buddhist philosophical tradition, there is the notion of the "veil of Maya," repeatedly used by Schopenhauer in *The World as Will and Representation*. In Sanskrit and Pali, Maya means "illusion." This illusion manifests itself in various human beliefs, among them being the pretension of the existence of *svabhāva*. The word *svabhāva* can be understood as "intrinsic nature" or "essential nature," that is, something that makes things what they are, and without which they could not be. It is a metaphysical quality that the first Buddhist philosophers (those of the so-called Theravada Vehicle or, better, Vehicle of the South or of the Ancients, particularly the Sarvāstivāda) believed to find in something they called dharmas, namely, fundamental particles of existence. "In marked contrast to the lower level of reality represented by the phenomenal world itself of composite constructs, physical and mental, these pre-empirical elementary conceptual dharmas are declared as belonging to the highest level of ontological existence, as substantial, real and permanent entities, endowed with intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*)" (Loundo 19). To make

an analogy, dharmas are, in Buddhism, the equivalent of atoms for Greek philosophy (Leucippus and Democritus).

On the contrary, Nāgārjuna –founder of the Mahāyāna Vehicle – affirms that these fundamental particles do not exist, and that, therefore, reality lacks an intrinsic nature, which implies that it is empty of said element (hence the notion of emptiness). Instead, what we have is a "conditioned origin" (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Everything depends on everything. Linear chains of cause and effect become infinite bifurcations, a kind of rhizome. Ergo, there is nothing that is essential to reality itself, because what we call essential depends, in turn, on another element, and so on ad infinitum. As Nāgārjuna (2011) says:

We affirm that emptiness is the conditioned origin (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and that this emptiness, when understood as a mere designation (*prajñapti*), is precisely the middle way. For no phenomenon is conceivable that is not relational, that does not have a conditioned origin: for this reason, we cannot conceive of a dharma that is not empty. . . . How could pain happen without having a conditioned origin? Suffering is taught to be impermanent, for it is not conceivable in terms of own nature. (24.18, 19, 21)

If there is nothing that has intrinsic nature, then there is nothing real in terms of an "in itself." What we see in front of us is the infinite correlation of causes and conditions. Thus, "each of the causes and conditions that produce the reflection, including the supposedly real object, are in turn the result of other causes and conditions, equally dependent, equally lacking in own nature. We find ourselves in an illusion that is within another illusion (ad infinitum)" (Arnau 77).

This is what in Buddhism is called "illusion," a kind of Matrix,² from which we interpret the world, assuming that it (and its elements or objects) has an intrinsic nature, and that, therefore, we as human beings can decipher and possess such nature. Perhaps, as Buddhism suggests, that is, paradoxically, the germ of ignorance (*avidya*).

We assume that our experience is an objective fact that allows us to relate to the world as it is, with a supposed essential reality that, from metaphysics and ontology to epistemology and ethics, empowers us to determine what truth is. Hence, Mahāyāna Buddhism requires the theory of two truths. On the one hand, there is the pretension of an ultimate truth (*paramārtha*), which would have to be in cognitive possession of the fundamental dharmas of reality. But, as already said, this is only an illusion, caused by the "proliferation" (*prapañca*) of erroneous concepts, ideas and ideologies that obscure the truth; a mental verbiage that confuses us and makes us believe that our senses (or our mind) effectively have the power to know reality per se.

On the other hand, we have the conventional truth (*saṃvṛti*), a concept that renounces a fundamental ontology, to instead move towards a metaphysics or epistemology of humility (ethics), an epistemology of a pragmatic nature where truth is useful, necessary, instrumental, because it allows us to agree on relevant issues. Thus, any fundamentalist assumption that assumes that the human being, in his infinite ignorance, can ever achieve a kind of ultimate and absolute truth is renounced. That is what I called mythos.

To further explore this concept, I will now delve into two prominent theories: cognitive biases and the synergic theory of Jacobo Grinberg-Zylberbaum.

2.1. Cognitive Biases

Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman have been two psychologists, pioneers in the study of cognitive biases. Their research began in 1974 with the publication of *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. Today, although there is no consensus on the number of existing cognitive biases, an average between 150 and 200 is calculated. This means that our way of perceiving what we call reality is distorted, that we cannot fully trust our judgment about the world, that our brain is built in such a way that it operates under survival mechanisms that have little to do with a supposed objective reality. For example, today it is

known that color does not exist, but is manufactured by our brain³ with the intention of helping us to differentiate objects in space more easily and, thus, be able to survive.

There are different types of cognitive biases. A simple classification divides them into 1) perception and attention biases, 2) decision-making and judgment biases, and 3) social and interaction biases (Jiménez 5-6). That being so, how can we, as human beings, even assume that we have privileged access to reality, when our knowledge is always full of gaps, what Blaga calls “transcendental censorship”?

Apparently, many philosophers were anchored in the claims of modern Eurocentric philosophy — particularly positivism — which pretended that such a thing as objectivity exists:.

Recall that, for positivist theory, scientific validity corresponds exclusively to the former, to "factual judgments." From this perspective, only propositions referring to facts of the physical world were considered "objective", while judgments relating to social and spiritual matters were taken as "subjective". Consequently, only propositions of the first type could be considered "scientific" and rationally valid, while those of the second type expressed mere unverifiable preferences, lacking in truth validity. (Muñoz-Torres 163)

In addition to Auguste Comte, Juan Ramón Muñoz-Torres highlights Max Weber and the logical positivism of the 20th century as the main exponents of these theses. And we cannot ignore that a large part of the pretensions of the sciences (be they natural, human, social, spiritual, etc.) relies on a criterion of truth associated with objectivity. That is why Denise Najmanovich tells us about the myth of objectivity (2016). The philosophy and sciences of the 19th and 20th centuries (and we can go further and further back) share this quest. The detail is that new research in the field of neuroscience (such as neuropsychology) suggests that we are far from achieving that much-desired objectivity or, in any case, that what we call "objective" is not so clear, at least not from the Cartesian (and modern) view of the distinction between *res*

cogitans and *res extensa* (Descartes 36). If we insist on using this category because it has become part of the narrative of the various sciences, then it is necessary that we think, in light of new research, what it is that we call objective, thus redefining the concept.

2.2. The Synergic Theory

Grinberg-Zylberbaum is a Mexican scientist (neurophysiologist) whose research approached the field of parapsychology, as he encountered the Mexican shamanic tradition, which gave a twist to his paradigms of thought. In what is perhaps one of his densest texts, he develops what he called the "synergic theory," a comprehensive model that helps us understand how the human experience of reality is generated based on the interaction between the brain and a fundamental structure of the universe that the author calls "Lattice" or matrix of space. As mentioned in the introduction to Grinberg-Zylberbaum's book:

Between reality and perception there are transformation processes that happen through our neuronal machinery, this indicates that we actively intervene in the creation of perceptual reality and that we are not detached from either objects or living beings. Reality is one but we divide it with boundaries of separation that depend on the level of consciousness in which we function and not on reality itself (Ken Wilber). To access reality as it is, we should place ourselves in the consciousness of unity, erase our filters, our personal history and our conditioning. What we perceive is a limited human creation. (Grinberg-Zylberbaum 2)

What is worth dwelling on is that "what we perceive is a limited human creation." That is, if there is a reality in itself, we cannot fully reach it because, in order to do this, we should become one with the consciousness of that unity (the unity of reality), which would imply erasing our filters, that is, our cognitive biases. Obviously, there is no individual who lacks cognitive biases; we may not all have all of them, but we always have some or several:

Our brain system interacts with a limited portion of the Lattice through its receptive organs. This portion of the Lattice is transformed into a neuronal language and . . . a perceptual image is created that is always a representation and not reality itself. . . . We do not know what is outside of ourselves or what is what stimulates us. We only know the final product of our brain processing but we confuse it with reality itself. . . . What we perceive is a limited human creation and that the qualities that we attribute to reality result from a restricted interaction with the Lattice of space. (Grinberg-Zylberbaum 21)

This would support what we have been mentioning: 1) that we do not know reality itself, but only its representation, 2) that this representation is the result of the interaction of the Lattice with our brain through our receptive organs, and 3) that what we perceive is a human creation.

In fact, curiously, this would seem to be the reproduction of Schopenhauer's theses, who postulates that this world is "will and representation." But, to get to that, he begins his great work by saying: "the world is my representation; this is the truth that applies to every living and knowing being" (Schopenhauer 51). We could dedicate an entire article to the analogies between Grinberg-Zylberbaum's and Schopenhauer's postulates, but since that is not one of the objectives of this article, it will remain a mere premise for future inquiries. What is certain is that there is a clear similarity between the Grinbergian Lattice and the Schopenhauerian Will, since these would be the equivalent of reality itself. It is true, each author presents it to us with his own language, but, in the end, they refer to that matrix or basic structure of the universe. On the other hand, the two speak of representation, as a form of distortion of that basic matrix. For Schopenhauer, the principle of individuation is the key to such "distortion."

That is why I contend that philosophical pessimism⁴ (my utopian pessimism being a derivation) requires an architecture of mythos as the foundation of its subsequent explanations. This architecture is already found, in an embryonic way, in Schopenhauer. Therefore, both Schopenhauer and Grinberg (who,

as far as I know, is not part of this tradition, but shares similarities in this specific construction) turn to the Buddhist tradition to explain their theses or hypotheses. Thus, while Schopenhauer constantly talks about the veil of Maya, Grinberg-Zylberbaum emphasizes emptiness (*śūnyatā*):

Ignorance of Sunyata has led the Western mind to forget that between Reality and its perception there are varied and complex transformation processes on the part of the neuronal machinery. In this way we confuse the product of these transformations with their origin. We consider, for example, that there is a world external to us with objects detached from our processing when in reality we actively intervene in the creation of perceptual reality and we are not detached from the objects we perceive or from the living beings with whom we interact. (Grinberg-Zylberbaum 20)

That is why I entitled my thesis: *The World as Emptiness and Mythos*. The world as emptiness is the world as will, the Lattice, reality itself, which, in the case of Buddhism, is the ultimate truth, the truth that refers us to the fact that there are no ultimate truths, but only conventional ones, which, at the same time, are the world as representation, the world as mythos.

In what follows, I will examine Blaga's perspective on this issue.

3. Mythos and Mystery

In order to speak of mythos, in Blaga, it is first necessary to decipher what mystery is. For the Romanian philosopher, "the myth is an attempt to reveal a mystery through imaginative means, in an effort to convert the mystery of existence," according to Emilia Ivancu (214).

On the other hand, Blaga also comes up with the concept of "magical thinking," which, unlike "mythical thinking," tries to prolong that same mystery:

The category of mystery, which Blaga locates right in the core of the theory of knowledge, also represents the principal connection with his metaphysical theory. Mystery is the core of the metaphysics of knowledge because it expresses the consciousness of an essential absence. As a category like substance, mind or time, mystery also represents an idea in the negative, a singular idea by means of which the power of transcending existing conceptions and frameworks is permitted to Luciferian knowledge. Integration with mystery takes place in three ways: the attenuation, making permanent and extension of the unknown. All philosophers so far, says Blaga, have felt the overall presence of mystery, yet they have been afraid of its existence, so that they have tried to annihilate it by negation. (Botez, Allen and Șerban 22)

Mystery is an absence of knowledge. Most philosophers have realized the limitations of the human being when trying to understand the world (examples of this are: the myth of Plato's cave, the concept of learned ignorance by Nicholas of Cusa, or the various skeptical schools, such as that of the little-known Spanish philosopher Francisco Sánchez, or the mystical-rationalist vision of the Mexican poet (New Spain) Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz).

Blaga's innovation lies in the fact that he does not want to diminish this mystery, nor does he remain in a hint of nostalgia or longing. For him, this is precisely the subject of a whole mythopoetic metaphysical theory that delves into the various layers of reality, not so much to understand them, but to increase them in their own mystery (something closer to negative theology). "The novelty of Blaga's metaphysics resides in his accepting this permanent presence of mystery and, since every philosophy is born under the species of a category, his philosophy is built up under the species of mystery" (Botez, Allen, and Șerban 23).

In a well-known poem ("Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii," 1919), the philosopher approaches the concept of mystery in the following terms:

I do not crush the corolla of wonders of the world
nor kill

with my mind the mysteries I find in my way
 in flowers, in eyes, on lips or in tombs.
 The light of others
 strangles the spell of the unknowable hidden
 in the depths of darkness,
 but I,
 I with my light enhance the mystery of the world,
 and just as with its white rays the moon
 does not diminish, but, trembling,
 further increases the mystery of the night,
 so I also enrich the dark sky
 with broad tremors of holy mystery
 and all the incomprehensible
 is transformed into more incomprehensible
 before my eyes,
 because I love
 flowers and eyes and lips and tombs.⁵

Mystery is, then, the foundation of philosophy and metaphysics, at least as Blaga sees it. That is why he argues that we will never stop creating metaphysical systems (no matter how much some currents or schools of thought try to do so), because it is part of our "nature" (Blaga, *Trilogia Cosmologică* 59); we always try to penetrate more into the mystery of existence, but, as we do so, we open up new mysteries (Savulescu 70-71). And the greatest of all mysteries is the Great Anonymous.

3.1. The Great Anonymous

The "central category" of the Blagian system is the Great Anonymous (*Marele Anonim*). It all starts with the origin of the Universe. Blaga discusses the possibility that it has always existed (without origin) and that it has a specific origin. And although both are conceptually possible, Blaga prefers the latter, since it "greatly facilitates addressing cosmological problems in general" (*Trilogia Cosmologică* 60). The problem is that this origin is "unknown" to us. However, there are ways to refer to it. Here we see Blaga's creative-artistic capacity, since he will implement, from metaphor

and myth, the concept of the Great Anonymous to refer to this "reality." And, precisely because of this, we must clarify that the Great Anonymous is not equivalent to the Judeo-Christian God. In fact, the Great Anonymous, as equivalent to "an absolute metaphysical principle," could be the "substance," the "absolute ego," the "immanent reason," the "Unconscious," the "Conscious," etc. (449). The Great Anonymous is all these things, a central principle of interpretation of reality:

The Great Anonymous is a 'unitary entity' of an utmost substantial and structural complexity, a wholly autarchic existence, namely a self-sufficient one. Being fully aware that we are suggesting a metaphysical myth, we assign the Great Anonymous the ability of 'self-reproducing' himself ad infinitum, in an identical way, without exhausting and without assimilating outward substances. With this we have outlined the thesis that we mean to place at the foundation of our speculative enterprise. (Blaga, *The Great Anonymous* 47)

We are faced with a "metaphysical myth" that aims to give clues about the origin of the universe, a principle that is absolutely unknown to us, anonymous. We know nothing about it, but we intuit it to account, as far as possible, for the Absolute, for the Ineffable. There is no knowledge (and I do not think there will ever be) that can explain the totality of the real. We intend, with our sciences and our intellect, to explain what is beyond our comprehension. And, deep down, this is very human; I am not saying that the opportunity to continue learning, deciphering the mysteries, should be eliminated, provided that, as already mentioned in Blagian theory, we understand that we will never arrive at the ultimate explanation, that each mystery solved opens up a dozen more.

Perhaps here also lies the difference that Jacques Lacan (1966) makes between reality and the real, the former a human construct, the latter the unrepresentable and impossible, that which escapes language and the symbolic. The Real is the Great Anonymous, the Mystery in its utmost expression. We try to approach that Mystery through mythical,⁶ magical, poetic thinking,

but we always fall into the illusoriness (Maya) of our linguistic-symbolic representations, realizing that they are empty. This does not imply, as I have argued, the renunciation of knowledge (paradisiacal or luciferian), but the adoption of a new attitude and the assumption of a new metaphysics: the metaphysics of mythos.

4. Towards a Metaphysics of Mythos

Blaga, and much of the Buddhist tradition, I argue elsewhere, invite us to construct a metaphysics of mythos to understand reality. How can this be done? Let us think that metaphysics has been dominated by the idea of Logos (Bonilla, *El mundo*). Thus, from Plato and Aristotle, through the Middle Ages to our times, logos, reason, logic, and calculation, under different masks, have been considered privileged instruments of access to reality.

Schopenhauer gives us the clue, hence the need to turn to pessimism. The core of his philosophy lies in the confrontation between Logos and the Will (an irrational principle). For the Buddha of Frankfurt, "the ideas of a reason capable of knowing everything with a good method (Descartes), of an indefinite progress of the human race (Enlightenment) and of a world that is the best of all possible (Leibniz) are left behind" (Schopenhauer 12). The Will, the Without-Reason is the metaphysical principle that underlies all representation, all reality. Reason, on the other hand, is accessory. In this sense, we can say that the human being is more animal than rational but strives to appear otherwise. The investigations of Sigmund Freud, António Damasio and Joseph LeDoux, among others, point in that direction.

But the metaphysics of mythos cannot be satisfied only with the realm of emotional charge. When we speak of the irrational, we do not think only of the emotional but of something that completely escapes our reason. For example, the idea of a Supreme Divine Entity escapes our reason, but that is not why it is something purely emotional (although of course it can be said that faith has an emotional component, perhaps more than the rational one). In fact, the problem is the very concept of irrationality, since it is

something that is defined negatively, as a mere opposite of the rational. Everything that is not rational is irrational, such as emotions, but also art, dreams, intuition, and poetry. That is, although they are dimensions that we can analyze (and construct) from reason, they have something that escapes it; their language is not that of logic but that of metaphor, that of the fantastic, or even of the mythical and the magical.

Therefore, in order to be able to speak of a metaphysics of mythos, it is necessary to speak of the meta-rational. It is not the opposite of reason, but what goes beyond it. The theses set forth by Grinberg-Zylberbaum or Blaga, although starting from a rational language, point to something that surpasses the human epistemic condition. The Great Anonymous or the Lattice are categories that lend themselves to logical debate, but which, ultimately, speak to us of something that is beyond the thinkable, that is, of something that is ineffable (or partially so).

If pure reason has, as Immanuel Kant taught us, limits, then there is something that is beyond those limits (Kant called it noumenon and Schopenhauer Will, while for Blaga it is the Great Anonymous). The question is how we can know what is beyond those limits. Blaga gives us the answer: with mythical thinking and with magical thinking. Magical thinking is problematic because its pretense is not to reveal, even to a minimum degree, the mystery of what is beyond reason, but rather to prolong that mystery (which is commendable). However, what we are looking for is an understanding that is meta-rational, intuitive, and, for this, the key is mythical thinking (mythos). Plato exiled the poets from his Republic because, to him, they were creators of mythos, of false words or speeches. So, in order to lay the foundations of a metaphysics of mythos, we need the architects: the poets.

Poetry, Martin Heidegger showed us, goes far beyond poetry as a literary genre. The poet is a creator, an alchemist of dreams. A poet is an artist, someone who, with his creations (musical, literary, etc.), takes us beyond the limits of pure reason and takes us into the realm of the unknown. "All art is essentially poetry" (Heidegger 96). Schopenhauer saw art as a path to redemption. The problem

with art, for the Buddha of Frankfurt, is that it only provides us with momentary liberation. Perhaps Schopenhauer was looking for art only in certain works thus considered, that is, to works that are culturally accepted as art. Nevertheless, in order to found a metaphysics of mythos, the meaning of art must be radical:

That impulse towards the formation of metaphors, that fundamental impulse of the human being that can never be eliminated because with it the human being himself would be eliminated, is not truly dominated or barely tamed by the fact that with its evanescent products, the concepts, a new, regular and rigid world is built, which is like a fortress for him. Said impulse seeks a new field and a different cause for its activity and finds them in myth and, in general, in art. (Nietzsche 617-618)

The Artist (thus, with a capital letter, to differentiate him from the artist who produces some work socially valued as art) is a Philosopher (thus, with capital letters, to differentiate him from the philosopher who is recognized for having studied such a profession and for possessing a title), the creator (*ars*) who loves wisdom (*sophia*), a kind of magician or shaman, a man of knowledge, a sorcerer (Castaneda 98). This is where the ultimate tension between magical and mythical thinking manifests itself, since it is already a mere matter of the intentionality of knowledge (more, less or zero, in Blagian terms). Don Juan was an Artist, a Philosopher, and so were Pachita, Morihei Ueshiba, Buddha and Christ. Through a meta-rational language (parables, symbols, ki), they all tried to open our minds to that reality that is beyond, to that "Separate Reality."⁷

We, simple neophytes, can try to integrate their message, for which we require a method, which, in this case, would be that of onto-poetics. I cannot stop developing such a method that far exceeds the pretensions of the present. However, Mauricio Beuchot has already left the clues in his book *Being and Poetry* (2003). It is enough not to forget that "the being places itself in poetry, sings in the poem" (9). That is why, according to Mauricio Beuchot, for

Aristotle, poetry was more philosophical than history, since it speaks of the universal (qtd. in Beuchot 9).

For now, "let's leave aside the assumption – in itself quite questionable – that a rational life has to be a myth-free life. Rational or not, life without myths is like life without art or sex, bland and inhuman" (Gray 69).

5. Utopian Pessimism and Lucian Blaga

It is evident that utopian pessimism is not explicitly present as such in Blaga's work. As previously mentioned, this category is the philosophical proposition of the present writer. However, its presence can be traced, in an analogous manner, in some of the central elements of the Romanian philosopher's thought. Specifically, in the interrelation of myth, mystery, and the Great Anonymous.

Utopian pessimism is nourished by the tension between the acceptance of suffering inherent in existence and the search for transcendence (utopia). This tension is, in turn, nourished by Blaga's exploration of mystery, integrating it with the development of the category of mythos.

For Blaga, myth is not a mere fable or a lie, but a form of knowledge that seeks to reveal the mystery of existence through imagination. Mystery, on the other hand, is the awareness of an essential absence, of a limit in human knowledge that cannot be overcome by reason.

This acceptance of the limitation of human knowledge and the search for transcendence through myth are elements present in utopian pessimism. Utopian pessimism recognizes the inevitability of suffering, but it is not limited to resignation or despair. Instead, it seeks transcendence through the construction of "mythos" or utopias that, while they cannot eliminate suffering completely, offer a glimpse of hope.

Another element of Blaga's work that connects with utopian pessimism is the concept of the Great Anonymous. The Great Anonymous is the representation of the Absolute, of the Ineffable,

of the ultimate origin of the Universe that remains inaccessible to human knowledge.

This dichotomy between the known and the unknown, between the limitation of human knowledge and the search for the transcendent, is a central element of utopian pessimism. Utopian pessimism recognizes that ultimate reality will always be a mystery, but it does not renounce the search for truth, even if it is merely conventional.

Ultimately, utopian pessimism can be interpreted as a metaphysics of myth, a way of understanding reality that recognizes the limitation of human knowledge and the importance of mythical and poetic thought for the search for transcendence.

Blaga's thought, with its emphasis on myth, mystery, and the Great Anonymous, offers a solid foundation for the construction of this metaphysics of myth. Blaga invites us to go beyond the limits of reason and to explore reality through imagination and intuition, essential elements of utopian pessimism.

In conclusion, although utopian pessimism is not explicitly developed in Blaga's work, its presence can be traced through some of the central elements of his thought. The connection between myth, mystery, the Great Anonymous, and the metaphysics of myth offers a solid basis for arguing the presence of utopian pessimism in his work.

Notes:

¹ I trust that no one will be surprised by the use I will make of the first person from time to time. This topic is being debated in the academies and has been endorsed, among others, by Antolí Martínez, 2019; Cassany, 1999.

² As Robert Wright (2017) says, this film was called a "dharma film" for a reason.

³ See Beau Lotto (2017).

⁴ Pessimism is a philosophical system, theory, or doctrine which presents? (please include a more appropriate verb instead of proposes in order to avoid confusion) this world, whether at a metaphysical, social, political, cultural, or other level, as the worst of all possible worlds. It understands

that evil and decay constantly corrode it, rendering a radical change of the world impossible, as if it were cursed, and this curse were irreversible. Historically, it was founded by Arthur Schopenhauer and constitutes a school of thought that has had various exponents to this day. . . . Pessimism, in general, is the awareness of the fall of humankind, a fall that produces metaphysical-existential suffering for which a cure has not been found. It is not merely a trite and static complaint, in which case we would prefer the term "negativism," but rather a lament laden with self-awareness and transformation. It is a "clenching of teeth" that leads us to recognize our own condition as human beings and that, instead of avoiding the "bitter pill," prefers to assume it as a foundation for heroism (Bonilla "Pesimismo" 236-237).

⁵ My own translation.

⁶ Science itself is a myth, according to John Gray.

⁷ This is the name of a book by Carlos Castaneda, but here it is used as a category of thought.

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